DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 230 831 CG 016 698

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TITLE Age Norms: The Influence of Age, Sex, and Occupational Level.
PUB DATE Nov 82
NOTE 33p.; Paper presented at the Annual Scientific Meeting of the Gerontological Society (35th, Boston, MA, November 19-23, 1982).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Adults; *Age Differences; Blue Collar Occupations; Comparative Analysis; *Developmental Stages; *Employment Level; *Expectation; Norms; Opinions; *Sex Differences; Sex Role; White Collar Occupations
IDENTIFIERS *Age Appropriateness

ABSTRACT

Although informal age norms which influence the timing of major role transitions have been well documented, recent research questions the pervasiveness of this influence. In order to assess the effects of age, sex, and occupational level on perceptions of informal age norms, white-collar and blue-collar men and women (N=462) at two age levels, 18-39 and 40-70, completed a 24-item questionnaire designating appropriate ages for major role transitions and age related characteristics. These data were compared with findings from similar studies in the 1950's and 1960's in order to ascertain the influence of social change. Statistical analyses indicated that there were significant main effects for age, but their direction varied with type of item. Results also showed effects for occupation, with blue collar respondents reporting earlier appropriate ages than white collar workers. Men and women alike adhered to transitional distinctions in sex roles. Both sexes followed a double standard of aging, e.g., women were perceived as aging more rapidly than men. There was some evidence of liberalized attitudes toward aging but just as much evidence for a heightening of America's youth orientation. The Life Events Questionnaire, standard deviations of perceived appropriate ages, and tables comparing men's and women's perceptions during the 1960's and the 1980's are included. (AG)

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AGE NORMS: THE INFLUENCE OF AGE, SEX, AND OCCUPATIONAL LEVEL

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CG 016698

Paper presented to the Section on Behavioral and Social Sciences at the 35th Annual Meeting of the Gerontological Society of America, Boston, November 1982.

Abstract

The effects of age, sex, and occupational level on perceptions of informal age norms were assessed by asking white-collar and blue-collar men and women at two age levels (18-39 and 40-70; 53-60 per group, N = 462) to designate appropriate ages for major role transitions (e.g., marriage, completion of education, holding top job) and age-related characteristics (e.g., middle age, prime of life). Comparisons with findings from similar studies in the 1950's and 1960's were made to check for the influence of social change. Statistical analyses disclosed a "fast" blue-collar view of the life cycle, with major transitions occurring relatively early, as described in previous studies. For the most part men and women alike adhered to traditional distinctions in sex roles. Both sexes adhered to a double standard of aging: Women are perceived as aging more rapidly than men, even though in women's eyes, men do not age as rapidly as they themselves believe. There were numerous differences between age levels, some of these (e.g., age for completion of education) traceable to cohort effects (i.e., social change), some traceable to the influence of aging (e.g., when a person is middle-aged), and some attributable to a combination of aging and cohort effects. The individuals' perspective on the life cycle changes with age, perhaps in part for self-enhancement, or as a defensive denial of aging. There was some evidence of liberalized attitudes towards aging but just as much evidence for heightening of America's youth orientation.

Introduction

The operation of informal age norms which influence the timing of major role transitions and the perception of movement from one period of adulthood to another has been well-documented (Neugarten & Peterson, 1957; Neugarten, Moore & Lowe, 1965; Neugarten & Datan, 1973; Neugarten & Hagestad, 1976). The pervasive influence usually attributed to these norms has been called into question by recent descriptions of a "fluid" life cycle (Hirschorn, 1977) and by assertions that we are moving into an "age-irrelevant society" (Neugarten, 1979). One purpose of the study described here was to check on these impressions. This was done by comparing current perceptions of informal norms with findings in the 1960's by Neugarten et al (1965). The outcome of these comparisons, based on 19 life cycle events and age-related characteristics, was reported at the Annual Meeting of this society two years ago (Sills, Zepelin & Brill, 1980). Another purpose of the same study was to assess the influence of age (or cohort), gender, and socioeconomic status on perceptions of informal norms -- a question that has received scant systematic attention in the last 20 years. The role of these factors is the principal subject of this report.

Method

Research Instrument

A questionnaire consisting of 24 items was employed (see Appendix A). Nineteen of these (i.e. all but Numbers 6, 20, 21, 23, and 24) were utilized by Neugarten et al (1965). Several items differed slightly from

their original form. Number 7 originally referred only to men; Number 22 referred to a "good-looking" woman; and Numbers 10 - 14 began with the phrase, "What age comes to your mind when you think of ..." Items Number 6, 20, and 21 were added for balanced treatment of the sexes. Items Number 23 and 24 broadened the scope of the original questionnaire by adding parenthood.

The questionnaire also inquired about the respondents' sex, age, level of education, and occupation (including occupation of spouse). College students were asked about their parents' occupations.

Data Collection

Two age spans were represented in the study: 18 - 39 and 40 - 70. Though unequal in number of years, the age ranges were defined in this manner to permit comparisons with ages 40 - 70, as studied by Neugarten et al (1965). Data was collected for white-collar and blue-collar men and women at each age level. The respondents were classified by occupational level rather than social class because it was not feasible to collect all the information necessary for determination of social class. Housewives were classified on the basis of their husbands' occupations. Students in the first two years of college were classified on the basis of their parents' occupations. Upper-level students, if employed full-time, were classified in their own right. The data were collected with quota sampling procedures from late 1979 to early 1982, primarily in Michigan, and in California and Florida as well. Questionnaires were

collected through civic groups, labor unions, business associations, and senior citizens' centers, and also at apartment complexes and in college classrooms.

Respondents did not always supply answers for every questionnaire item. Questionnaires lacking appropriate responses to more than 10 items were discarded. Along with missing answers, responses judged inappropriate were any that were facetious (e.g. "age 100" as "the prime of life,") or overly broad in terms of age range. Respondents were urged to give a specific age for each item or "as narrow a range as possible." An age span of more than 15 years was considered too broad and therefore inappropriate. Altogether, about four percent of the collected questionnaires were discarded because of an inadequate number of responses. Collection of questionnaires continued for each subsample (as defined by age, gender, and occupation) until there were at least 50 appropriate responses for each of the first 22 questionnaire items (representing the original 19 life events). Sample size consequently varied somewhat among the subsamples, as Table 1 shows. The number of responses per item ranged from 50 - 60 for items Number 1 - 22. For Items Number 23 and 24 they ranged from 42 - 60.

Table 1

Size and Characteristics of the Research Sample

	White collar		Blue collar	
	Ages 18-39	Ages 40-70	Ages 18-39	Ages 40-70
Men				
M =	53	58	59	60
Mean age	26.3(6.4)	55.4(8.7)	27.8(5.6)	58.7(9.5)
Education (mean years)	14.8(1.8)	15.1(2.6)	12.2(1.1)	11.2(1.7)
Women				
M	59	53	60	60
Mean age	25.5(6.3)	54.5(8.6)	27.1(6.5)	59.1(8.8)
Education (mean years)	14.0(1.3)	13.7(2.2)	12.4(1.0)	11.2(1.6)

Note: Standard deviations are in parentheses.

Statistical Analyses

In all analyses, when the response for an item consisted of an age range rather than a specific age, the midpoint of that range was taken as the response. (For example, ages 50-60 were treated as age 55. Half-years were rounded upwards.) Effects of age, sex, and occupational level and their interactions were assessed with three-way analysis of variance for each item. Relationships between age and perceived norms were evaluated further with correlation coefficients calculated between the respondents' ages and their responses for the various items. Where it seemed appropriate, *t*-tests were employed to evaluate differences in the perceived timetables for men and women. Comparisons between the 1960's and the 1980's (Appendices C and D) were utilized to aid in assessing whether current age differences should be attributed to aging or to cohort effects. Throughout, statistical significance was at the .05 level.[1]

Results

Age Differences. As Table 2 shows, there were significant main effects for age on 19 of the 24 items, but their direction varied with type of item. The younger respondents gave significantly later ages than those at the upper age level for three of the five items related

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[1] Incidentally, the data provided an opportunity to check for evidence that the constraining influence of the norms increases with age, as suggested by Neugarten et al. (1965). The variance in the perceived norms can be taken as a measure of their constraining influence. Differences between upper and lower age levels with respect to variance in the responses were therefore checked item-by-item with *F*-tests. As shown in Appendix B, there were few significant differences, and almost all of these showed that variance, rather than decreasing, increased with age. It must be emphasized, however, that the questionnaire employed here was not the one used by Neugarten et al. to study constraint.

Table 2

Variations with Age, Sex, and Occupation in Average Ages Judged Appropriate for Age-related Events and Characteristics

Item	18-39	40-70	Men	Women	White collar	Blue collar
Family cycle						
Man should marry	25.5	25.5	25.4	25.6****	26.2	24.9****
Woman should marry	23.7	22.9**	22.9	23.7**	24.0	22.7****
Man: become a parent[4]	27.2	27.0[1]	27.0	27.1	28.2	26.1***
Woman: become a parent[4]	25.2	24.1**	24.3	25.0	25.9	23.6****
Become a grandparent	50.2	48.3**[1]	49.3	49.1	50.8	47.7****
Career						
Finish school; go to work	21.8	21.2**	21.6	21.3	22.4	20.6****
Man: settled on career	27.0	27.5	27.4	27.1	27.9	26.7*
Woman: begin a career outside home	24.3	27.4****	26.2	25.5	25.2	26.4
His/her top job	37.2	39.5**	39.8	36.8****	40.1	36.6****
Man: most responsibilities	33.4	37.1****	35.2	35.2	36.2	34.2**
Woman: most responsibilities	29.8	31.9****	30.8	30.9	31.3	30.4
Man: accomplishes most	35.2	41.7****	38.1	38.7	38.2	38.6

Table 2 (continued)

Item	18-39	40-70	Men	Women	White collar	Blue collar
Career (continued)						
Woman: accomplishes most	32.8	36.9****	34.9	34.7	35.3	34.3
Ready to retire	62.2	61.7	61.4	62.4	63.3	60.7****
Age-related attributes						
When a man is young	24.0	26.1**	24.5	24.5[2]	26.2	23.9**
When a woman is young	22.4	23.6	22.4	23.6[2]	23.7	22.3
When a man is middle-aged	43.5	46.5***	43.7	46.2***	45.4	44.6
When a woman is middle-aged	41.6	44.5****	40.7	45.3****	43.7	42.5
When a man is old	68.0	72.0****	68.1	71.9****	71.1	69.0*
When a woman is old	65.1	68.6****	63.5	70.3****	67.8	65.9
When a man is best-looking[4]	28.6	32.0****	29.7	30.8	31.8	28.9***
When a woman is best-looking	24.9	28.0****	25.7	27.1*	27.4	25.5**[3]
Prime of life for a man	34.5	40.3****	37.0	37.8	38.1	36.8[3]
Prime of life for a woman	33.0	37.7****	34.4	36.3*	35.9	34.9

Note.--Asterisks indicate significant differences between age groups, sexes, or occupational levels.

*p < .05 **p < .01 ***p < .001 ****p < .0001

[1]Significant interaction: age by sex

[2]Significant interaction: sex by occupation

[3]Significant interaction: age by sex by occupation

[4]Item is additional to those employed by Neugarten et al (1965).

to the family cycle. For these items, correlations between respondent's age and perceived ages ranged from -.17 to -.20. An age by sex interaction with respect to parenthood for men reflected perception of a later age by young women than by older women (27.5 vs. 26.6) but an opposite age pattern in men (26.9 vs. 27.3).

The younger respondents gave significantly earlier ages for all but two of the nine career-related items. Age of respondent correlated most strongly with age for most accomplishments by men (r = .38); the other significant correlations ranged from .11 to .25. The younger respondents gave a significantly later age than the old for finishing school (r = -.17). For age-related attributes, the younger respondents gave significantly earlier ages for nine of the 10 items, correlations with respondent's age ranging from .14 to .32.

Age and cohort effects. Table 3 summarizes conclusions reached regarding the type of effects represented by significant age differences. Absence of an age difference, when coupled with a cohort difference, clearly indicated a cohort effect (e.g., age of marriage for women). Absence of a cohort difference, when coupled with an age difference, clearly indicated an age effect (e.g., age of most responsibilities). Upward movement in perceived age over time, when coupled with a currently positive relationship between respondent's age and perceived age, indicated a combination of a cohort effect and an age effect (e.g., age when a man is young). Such upward movement, when coupled with a currently negative relationship between respondent's age and perceived age was interpreted as a cohort effect with older persons currently lagging the younger group (e.g., age of marriage for women).

Table 3

Separation of Age and Cohort Effects in Perceived Norms

	Age Pattern[1] (Direction of change with increasing age) (Sexes combined)	Cohort Pattern[2] (Direction of change; 1960's to 1980's) Men	Women	Effect shown by age difference in Table 2
Family cycle				
Man should marry	←→	↑	↑	
Woman should marry	↓	↑	↑	Cohort[3]
Become grandparent: Overall	↓	↑	←→	Cohort[4]
Male respondents	↑			
Female respondents	↓			
Career				
Finish school	↓	↑	↑	Cohort[3]
Man...career	←→	↑	↑	
Top job	↑	↓	↓	Cohort (+ age?)
Man...responsibilities	↑	←→	←→	Age
Woman...responsibilities	↑	←→	←→	Age
Man...accomplish	↑	↓[5]	↓	Cohort (+ age?)
Woman...accomplish	↑	←→	←→	Age
Retire	←→	↕	↕	

Table 3 - continued

	Age Pattern[1] (Direction of change with increasing age) (Sexes combined)	Cohort Pattern[2] (Direction of change; 1960's to 1980's) Men	Women	Effect shown by age difference in Table 2
Age-related attributes				
Man...young	↑	↑	↑	Age + Cohort
Woman...young	↔	↑	↑	
Man...middle-aged	↑	↔	↔	Age
Woman...middle-aged	↑	↓	↔	Age
Man...old	↑	↔	↔	Age
Woman...old	↑	↕[5]	↑	Age + Cohort
Woman...best-looking	↑	↔	↔	Age
Man...prime of life	↑	↔	↔	Age

Notes.--Analyses are based on statistically significant findings of age differences shown in Table 2 for all respondents and changes shown in Appendices C and D for men and women aged 40-70 Only items studied in 1960's and 1980's are included. Horizontal arrows indicate absence of age difference. Arrows in two directions indicate bidirectional change.

[1]Ages 18-70, sexes combined

[2]Ages 40-70

[3]Older age group in 1980's is lagging

[4]Older women in 1980's are lagging

[5]Nonsignificant trend ($p < .10$)

In the case of a downward cohort effect coupled with a currently positive correlation with age (e.g., "top job"), increasing age may supplement the cohort effect, but this cannot be established. Three age differences in Table 2 appear to be cohort effects. Eight appear to be age effects. Four appear to represent the combined influence of age and cohort. In two of these instances the role of age is questionable. (Five items could not be evaluated because data from the 1960's was lacking.)

Sex differences. As Table 2 shows, main effects for sex occurred on a total of eight items, and almost all of these were in the category of personal attributes. For six such items women gave significantly later ages than men, indicating a more generous and accepting attitude towards aging. On the other hand, for all five attributes, as shown by t-tests, men and women alike gave significantly earlier ages for women than for men, indicating perception of more rapid aging in women. Men perceived a greater sex differential than women, but in both sexes this differential increased with progression to later phases of adulthood (i.e., from being "young" to "middle-aged" to "old").

Occupational differences. There were main effects for occupation on 14 items. In all these instances, ages perceived as approprite by blue-collar respondents were earlier than those perceived by white-collar respondents. This held true for every family-cycle item and for five of the six career-related items that applied to men, but not for any of the career-related items that applied to women. With respect to age-related personal attributes, blue-collar respondents perceived men as "young," "old," and "best-looking" and women as "best-looking" at earlier ages than did the white-collar respondents. There were

interactions of occupational level and sex for the age when a man is young and for the corresponding item for women. In both instances, men of different occupational levels differed significantly from each other but women did not. (For age when a man is young, white-collar and blue-collar men respectively gave 26.7 and 22.7 years, while the corresponding ages for women were 25.8 and 25.3. For a young woman's age the corresponding figures were 24.1 and 20.8 vs. 23.3 and 23.9.) There was an interaction of age, sex, and occupational level for the age when a woman is best-looking. At both occupational levels women aged 40-70 gave higher ages than any other subsample, but in the white-collar group older men and women gave fairly similar ages (29.1 and 29.7) while young men and women differed sharply (23.9 vs. 26.8). In the blue-collar group, young men and women had similar averages (24.6 and 24.2), while the older group clearly differed (25.2 vs. 27.9). There was also a three-way interaction for men's prime of life. Among white-collar respondents both older men and women gave higher ages (42.4 vs. 34.2 for men; 41.0 vs. 34.7 for women); among blue-collar respondents, only older women gave a higher age (41.5 vs. 34.1, as opposed to 36.6 vs. 35 for younger women).

Discussion

Since this study was based on quota sampling, the extent to which its findings can be generalized is uncertain. It is noteworthy, however, that Neugarten et al. (1965), in their study of perceived norms, found essentially the same results with quota samples as with a stratified random sample. Likewise uncertain is the extent to which the findings may be colored by the definition of socioeconomic status in terms of occupational level rather than social class, but it is unlikely that they are far off the mark. The only other study to assess the influence of socioeconomic differences (Neugarten & Peterson, 1957) classified respondents aged 40-70 by social class and reported perceptions of a relatively quick life cycle in the lower class. A similar difference between occupational levels is strikingly apparent in the present study. Lower-class men in the Neugarten-Peterson study believed middle age for men occurs at 40 and old age at 60, while lower-middle class men gave corresponding ages of 45 and 70 and set "prime of life" at 35. Upper-middle-class men gave corresponding ages of 47, 70, and 40. Similar but weaker differences based on social class were reportedly present among women. (Neugarten and Peterson did not report "prime of life" as judged by working class men nor did they give any of the ages designated for middle age, old age, or "prime of life" for women.)

In the present study differences with respect to middle age and old age were narrower. This was true for the sample as a whole, as shown in Table 2, and for respondents aged 40-70 considered separately. Overshadowing these differences on age-related attributes were more consistent

differences with respect to family cycle and career. Unfortunately, since Neugarten and Peterson did not report specific ages for any items in these categories, additional item-by-item comparisons are not possible. Consequently it is not clear whether, in fact, there has been a narrowing of differences in perceived norms as they relate to social class. But judging by the narrow differences found here between occupational levels, it is likely that there has been some homogenization of perceptions about the timing of life events even as the "social clock" continues to run faster at lower socioeconomic levels.

Present findings make it dramatically clear that sex differences in perceptions of the norms are characterized by a double standard of aging to which women adhere even though they are seen as aging more rapidly (despite their superior longevity). This is consistent with previously reported impressions (Neugarten & Datan, 1973), but the absence of comparable data makes it impossible to judge whether significant change has occurred in recent years. Ongoing change in sex roles was reflected in the present study by the difference between the sexes regarding age of marriage for women. On the other hand, agreement between the sexes that women should marry and become parents at earlier ages than men indicates that the traditional view of sex roles remains dominant.

As could be expected, the findings show that social change contributes to age differences in perception of the norms. Not previously documented, however, is the effect of increasing age itself, which apparently modifies the individual's perspective on the life cycle. Higher ages given by older respondents for middle age, old age, time of greatest accomplishment, etc. are evidence of this effect. A defensive denial

of aging could be a contributing factor. Loosening of the norms in the past 20 years (Appendices C and D) does not mean that attitudes towards aging have become significantly more positive. It appears that one can be considered "young" now at a somewhat later age than before, but the ages for other attributes appear to remain fixed (e.g. "middle age," "prime of life"). Earlier ages for some role transitions (e.g., "top job," retirement) may involve heightened youth orientation, rather than positive acceptance of aging. The underlying age bias of American society is not on the verge of fading away.

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Appendix A

Life Events Questionnaire

1. What is the best age for a man to marry? _____
2. What is the best age for a woman to marry? _____
3. At what age is it best to become a grandparent? _____
4. What is the best age to finish school and go to work? _____
5. At what age should a man be settled on a career? _____
6. If a woman wants a career outside the home at what age should she begin? _____
7. At what age should a person hold his/her top job? _____
8. At what age should a person be ready to retire? _____
9. At what age is a man young? _____
10. At what age is a man middle aged? _____
11. At what age is a man old? _____
12. At what age is a woman young? _____
13. At what age is a woman middle aged? _____
14. At what age is a woman old? _____
15. At what age does a man have the most responsibilities? _____
16. At what age does a man accomplish most? _____
17. At what age does a woman have the most responsibilities? _____
18. At what age does a woman accomplish most? _____
19. When is the prime of life for a man? _____
20. When is the prime of life for a woman? _____
21. At what age is a man best looking? _____
22. At what age is a woman best looking _____
23. What is the best age for a man to become a parent? _____
24. What is the best age for a woman to become a parent? _____

Appendix B

Standard Deviations of the Ages Perceived as Appropriate by Respondents at Different Age Levels (Men and Women Combined)

	White collar		Blue collar	
	18-39	40-70	18-39	40.70
Man...marry	3.4	3.2	2.9	3.2
Woman...marry	3.1	3.0	3.1	3.5
Man...parent	3.5	4.0	3.3	3.5
Woman...parent	3.1	3.1	3.0	3.3
Grandparent	6.1	6.0	6.1	6.4
Finish school...	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.3
Man...career	5.5	5.8	4.6	5.7
Woman...career	5.2	6.7	7.0	8.3
Top job	8.6	9.1	7.3	8.6
Man...responsibilities	5.3	7.4*	6.4	8.1
Woman...responsibilities	4.9	5.7	6.3	7.4
Man...accomplish	8.1	7.5	7.7	9.5
Woman...accomplish	7.8	6.2	5.7	9.4
Retire	8.4	6.7	7.3	5.3*
Man...young	6.0	7.4	5.4	7.5*
Woman...young	8.7	8.8	5.3	10.1*
Man...middle-aged	6.7	7.5	7.0	6.6
Woman...middle-aged	7.0	8.1	6.6	8.1
Man...old	6.7	8.4	8.5	6.9
Woman...old	10.2	9.5	9.2	9.3
Man...best-looking	7.0	9.4*	6.9	9.7
Woman...best-looking	5.0	7.7*	6.5	8.0
Man...prime	7.3	8.6	8.3	10.3
Woman...prime	7.9	8.5	7.2	9.6*

*Significant difference in the variance for the two age groups at the same occupational level (df = 60; 60; $p < .05$, two-tailed).

Appendix C

Consensus Among Middle Class Men (Ages 40-70) in the 1960's and 1980's Regarding Age-related Characteristics and Events

Items	1960's		1980's		
	Age Range of Consensus	Percent that Concurred	Percent Agreeing on 1965 Age Range	Chi Square Test of Difference	Best Fitting Age Range Equal to 1965 Percent
Family cycle					
Best age for a man to marry	20-25	80	52	8.05**	23-30
Best age for a woman to marry	19-24	85	55	9.05**	20-27
Best age to become a grandparent	45-50	84	47	14.05***	45-60
Career					
Age to finish school and go to work	20-22	86	51	13.37***	20-25
Age for a man to be settled on a career	24-26	74	17	32.92***	25-35
Age for a person to hold his/her top job	45-50	71	35	13.11***	38-53
A man has the most responsibilities	35-50	79	75	0.18	32-50
A man accomplishes most	40-50	82	63	3.52	35-50
A woman has the most responsibilities	25-40	93	90	0.14	24-40

Appendix C - continued

Items	1960's Age Range of Consensus	1960's Percent that Concurred	1980's Percent Agreeing on 1965 Age Range	1980's Chi Square Test of Difference	1980's Best Fitting Age Range Equal to 1965 Percent
Career - continued					
A woman accomplishes most	30-45	94	90	0.14	30-45
When people should be ready to retire	60-65	83	56	7.07**	55-70
Age-related attributes					
Age when a man is young	18-22	84	40	19.50***	18-50
Age when a man is middle aged	40-50	86	71	2.50	38-55
Age when a man is old	65-75	75	62	1.67	65-75
Age when a woman is young	18-24	89	54	14.94***	15-35
Age when a woman is middle aged	40-50	87	65	6.33*	30-53
Age when a woman is old	60-75	83	67	3.29	55-80
The prime of life for a man	35-50	86	83	0.01	32-50
A good looking woman	20-35	92	79	2.74	18-40

Note.--Sample size for all items for the 1960's was 50. For the 1980's sample size varied from item to item, ranging from 50 to 58. For all chi square tests degrees of freedom = 1.

*p < .05 **p < .01 ***p < .001

Appendix D

Consensus Among Middle Class Women (Ages 40-70) in the 1960's and 1980's Regarding Age-related Characteristics and Events

Items	1960's Age Range of Consensus	1960's Percent that Concurred	1980's Percent Agreeing on 1965 Age Range	1980's Chi Square Test of Difference	1980's Best Fitting Age Range Equal to 1965 Percent
Family cycle					
Best age for a man to marry	20-25	90	60	10.18**	21-30
Best age for a woman to marry	19-24	90	54	13.66***	19-30
Best age to become a grandparent	45-50	79	62	2.43	45-55
Career					
Age to finish school and go to work	20-22	82	49	9.37**	19-26
Age for a man to be settled on a career	24-26	64	29	11.08***	25-35
Age for a person to hold his/her top job	45-50	58	23	11.17***	35-45
A man has the most responsibilities	35-50	75	77	0.00	35-50
A man accomplishes most	40-50	71	53	7.37**	35-50
A woman has the most responsibilities	25-40	91	90	0.01	25-40

Appendix D - continued

Items	1960's Age Range of Consensus	1960's Percent that Concurred	1980's Percent Agreeing on 1965 Age Range	1980's Chi Square Test of Difference	1980's Best Fitting Age Range Equal to 1965 Percent
Career - continued					
A woman accomplishes most	30-45	92	81	2.05	30-50
When people should be ready to retire	60-65	86	63	5.04	55-70
Age-related attributes					
Age when a man is young	18-22	83	44	13.96***	18-35
Age when a man is middle aged	40-50	75	73	0.02	40-53
Age when a man is old	65-75	57	57	0.00	69-83
Age when a woman is young	18-24	88	58	9.06	16-30
Age when a woman is middle aged	40-50	77	68	0.53	40-55
Age when a woman is old	60-75	87	62	3.89*	60-83
The prime of life for a man	35-50	80	75	0.83	30-50
A good looking woman	20-35	82	75	1.11	20-40

Note.--Sample size for all items in the 1960's was 43. In 1980, sample size varied from item to item, ranging from 50 to 53. For all chi square tests, degrees of freedom = 1.

*p < .05 **p < .01 ***p < .001